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The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity. The Gifford Lectures. By JOHN CAIRD, D.D., LL.D., late Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Glasgow. With a Memoir by Edward Caird, D.C.L., LL.D., Master of Balliol. 2 vols. Vol. I, pp. cxli + 232; Vol. II, pp. 297. The Macmillan Co., 1899. \$4.50.

THESE lectures are devoted to a discussion of natural and revealed religion, faith and reason, the Christian idea of God, the origin and nature of evil, the possibility of moral restoration, the idea of the incarnation and the atonement, the kingdom of the Spirit, and, finally, the future life. They consist in a philosophical interpretation and appreciation of the traditional dogmas of the Christian church. One who is interested in theological discussion based on Hegelian presuppositions, but finds Hegel himself inaccessible, or in a literary way harsh and intolerable, may turn to these volumes assured that he will find nothing better of their kind, probably nothing so good in our language. It is not meant that Caird slavishly follows Hegel, but that he independently sets forth in beautiful and luminous English, but also in a masterly way, scarcely second to Hegel himself, the Hegelian philosophy of religion.

But it is not expected that this JOURNAL shall give a critical review of Caird's theology. Sociological questions, however, are treated only in the most inferential manner; rather, are alluded to only in the most incidental way. From this it must not be inferred that he had no interest in the question, whether from the practical or the theoretical point of view. On the contrary, his memoir describes his practical pioneer work in his own land, opening a girls' school of industry during his early ministry, on whose building and equipment he spent much time and pains. "Girls grow up," so he writes of his early parish, "utterly ignorant of the commonest sorts of household work, are unfit for domestic servants, even of the rudest kind, still more unfit to manage their own houses when they marry. They have no habits of personal neatness, no taste for order, cleanliness, domestic comfort; they never aspire to anything beyond the mere eking out of their coarse, scanty, comfortless life, and their only pleasures are sensual indulgence and scandal. . . . I am determined to do something to help them." And so he founded this school.

On the theoretical side one gathers here and there from his volumes that he would emphasize (*a*) the impassable limits beyond which

sociology cannot go in its cure for the ills of life. "It cannot shield us from the sorrows that desolate the home and lie heaviest on the heart. It cannot minister balm to the wounded spirit, or bring peace to the troubled conscience, or lessen the anguish of bereavement, or dispel from our path the awful shadow that is creeping ever nearer and more near." That is, sociology is not substitute for religion, only hand-maid. It may help apply the remedy, never provide or supersede it. The aim must be something more than to make men comfortable, healthy, full-fed, easy-minded, and supplied with all manner of earthly satisfactions. (*b*) Sociological success is grounded in the new moral power introduced into the world by Christianity. Social ethics has religious base and presupposition. Sociology must have regard for the new ideas of human nature and human destiny which Christianity has introduced; must look upon all men in the light of that new ideal of humanity which the life of Christ sets before us. "The pettiness and triviality, the sordid vileness and degradation, that but too often attach to the life of man become to the eye of Christian observation no longer its essence but its accidents, only the foul accretions that obscure its inherent glory. . . . We cease to despair of the very worst." (*c*) The real sociological problem is not charitable relief of human wretchedness by sympathy and help to the forlorn and fallen, but how to dry up the poisoned springs from which that wretchedness proceeds. "The question is, not merely, Can we do anything to elevate and socialize the pariah class? but it is the deeper one, Can anything be done to prevent its very existence? Is it possible by a more searching diagnosis to detect and counteract the hidden disease in the social organism to which this abnormal product is due? Is there no fundamental cure for this terrible concomitant of modern civilization—increasing comfort or luxurious affluence on the one hand, and at the same time, on the other, the rise and growth of a class of social outcasts, of masses of human beings sunk to the lowest point at which existence is endurable, who have nothing to lose and nothing to hope for, and whom sometimes, when the brute impulse in them is unkenneled, neither fear of God nor fear of man restrains?"

There is nothing novel or even debatable in these views of Caird, but they are all he gives us. Of the purely scientific and methodological side of sociology he has nothing to say. If one sought a metaphysic for his sociology, Caird would have much to urge in favor of the organic, as against the mechanical, view of society and the world.

GEORGE B. FOSTER.